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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Summary record of the 11th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 22 June 2004, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Aisi ..... (Papua New Guinea)

Contents

Adoption of the agenda

Economic and other activities that affect the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories

Report of the Special Committee

Draft report to the General Assembly

Organization of work

Closure of the session

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04-39850 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

Economic and other activities that affect the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories
(A/AC.109/2004/L.13)

2. **The Chairman** drew attention both to a number of working papers that had been prepared by the Secretariat and that cited this agenda item and to draft resolution A/AC.109/2004/L.13.

3. *Draft resolution A/AC.109/2004/L.13 was adopted without a vote.*

4. **Mr. Ovia** (Papua New Guinea), making general comments, noted that, although the Special Committee adopted its resolutions without a vote, certain difficulties arose as a result of that when they were being adopted in the Fourth Committee. He suggested analyzing the content of the draft resolutions and, before submitting them to the Fourth Committee, altering some of the language, so as to make it more constructive. He cited paragraph 7 of the just-adopted resolution as an example. He suggested that, before the draft resolution was submitted to the Fourth Committee, other United Nations bodies' resolutions that were devoted to issues involving marine resources be used to change the language of that paragraph so as to make it reflect, above all, the need to protect marine resources for the peoples both of Non-Self-Governing Territories and of independent States.

5. **Mr. Requeilo Gual** (Cuba) said that the support of that draft by the administering Powers that were abstaining from voting on it was indeed important. It was no less important, however, to emphasize, as was done in paragraph 7 of the draft, that the predatory exploitation and plundering of the marine and other natural resources of Non-Self-Governing Territories threatened their integrity and well-being, seriously undermining the prospects for their self-determination in the future. Discussion of that question needed to continue, with an eye to making administering Powers cease harmful operations and cooperate with the Special Committee on Decolonization in the implementation of its decisions. Softening the language of that resolution would not afford a solution to the problem of enlisting administering Powers in the work of the Special Committee and would not force them to stop violating established norms. At the same time, including references to such documents as the Convention on the Law of the Sea in the draft could, in fact, be apropos.

6. **The Chairman** said that the Special Committee had concluded its consideration of the item.

Report of the Special Committee
(A/AC.109/2004/L.14)

7. **The Chairman** drew attention to the draft report of the Special Committee contained in document A/AC.109/2004/L.14, which had been approved beforehand during unofficial consultations of the Special Committee on 17 June 2004.

8. *The report of the Special Committee was adopted.*

Draft report to the General Assembly

9. **The Chairman** suggested, in keeping with the decision reached earlier, that the Rapporteur be authorized to re-work the draft resolutions and decisions of the Committee to conform to the format used in the General Assembly and to submit them directly to the Assembly.

10. *It was so decided.*

Organization of work

11. **Mr. Ortiz Gandarillas** (Bolivia) said that the Special Committee needed to step up its work and, in particular, to analyse the question of how to achieve the implementation of the resolutions adopted, each of which essentially contained a plan of action. That was particularly necessary in light of the approaching midterm review of the Second International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The call to step up the Special Committee's work was also contained in critical remarks made in the petitioners' addresses. A number of unofficial meetings needed to be held to develop a strategy for the work to implement its mandate.

12. At the same time, the speaker was pleased to note the achievements made in certain territories, particularly Tokelau. Tokelau could serve as an exemplary model of cooperation among the administering Power (in this case, New Zealand), a Non-Self-Governing Territory, and the Special Committee.

13. The speaker also felt that cooperation between the Committee and territories based on the conduct of seminars and visiting missions should be expanded, given the concern expressed over the fact that the people of some territories still did not have information on the existing options for self-determination.

14. **The Chairman**, commenting on the address of the representative of Bolivia, said that the problem of implementing decisions made was one of the most pressing problems of the United Nations system as a whole. The work to implement the resolutions adopted by the Special Committee would begin in unofficial meetings immediately after the completion of its current session.

15. **Mr. Requeilo Gual** (Cuba), sharing the concern voiced by Bolivia, said that particular attention needed to be devoted to work with administering Powers to bring about rapprochement and mutual trust, without which no progress would be possible. The position of one administering Power – New Zealand, which was cooperating across the board and supported an open, honest dialogue – could serve as a model of interaction proving that movement forward was possible. Other administering Powers, unfortunately, did not even attend meetings of the Special Committee. One could only hope that they were acquainted with its resolutions and other documents and followed its work in press releases.

16. The resolutions adopted by the Special Committee constituted the basis for its work in the future, and it was now necessary to refine the details of how those decisions would be implemented. The Cuban delegation was confident of the Special Committee's resolve and will to carry out the mandate given it by the General Assembly.

17. **Mr. Okio** (Congo) noted that the Special Committee needed to consider possible measures to further streamline its work. He was referring specifically to improving the work to disseminate information in Non-Self-Governing Territories. He felt it imperative that the people of all Non-Self-Governing Territories be properly informed of the self-determination options available to them. Such information did not always get to the people who needed it.

18. **Mr. Cousiño** (Chile) said that over the past almost one and a half decades of decolonization, only one territory – Timor-Leste – had gained independence. The aims and good intentions were the same as they were during the midterm review of the First Decade in 1995. Given that, it was necessary to focus the efforts on intensifying the work with administering Powers, because success in decolonization required the participation of both parties, and there were already modest signs of progress in that regard in terms of attention being on the Committee's work by France and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. One other positive turn was the fact that Special Committee seminars were being held in the Non-Self-Governing Territories themselves.

19. **Ms. Joseph** (Saint Lucia) noted that the regular convocation by the Special Committee of seminars in the region of the Caribbean Basin and the Pacific region was one of its most important activities. Such seminars made it possible to collect and summarize information on various aspects of the socio-economic situation in Non-Self-Governing Territories for later review. She also noted the need to ensure the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Special Committee and felt that new approaches needed to be studied in order to achieve that objective.

20. **Mr. Maleki** (Islamic Republic of Iran) expressed the hope that, in the context of the Second Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the international community would achieve all the goals it set for itself. From his standpoint, a number of elements were particularly important for accelerating the process of decolonization. He was referring to the organization of the visiting missions and the conduct, with the assistance of the administering Powers, of the seminars right in the Non-Self-Governing Territories themselves, as well as the conduct of campaigns to educate the people in order to acquaint them with their rights and with the ways that self-determination could be achieved. He suggested that the Special Committee, in the future, focus its attention on those elements.

Closure of the session

21. **The Chairman**, in concluding remarks pertaining to the completion of the work of the Special Committee, hoped that the completion of the session would be marked by the beginning of a new, successful stage in the Committee's work. He characterized the session as productive and noted that, during the session, the Special Committee had heard an entire array of interesting statements that moved one to think, had held constructive discussions, and had reached accord on resolutions that would make it possible for the Committee to move forward in its work.

22. Recalling that four years had already passed since the beginning of the Second Decade, he was confident that the aim of the Special Committee was to reduce the scale of its work by the end of the Decade and not plan such work for a Third Decade. He noted the progress achieved by Tokelau in the self-determination process and suggested that the Special Committee consider the possibility of reproducing Tokelau's successful experience for other Non-Self-Governing Territories.

23. In terms of procedural matters, measures were adopted that were geared to improving the efficiency of the work of the Special Committee by further reducing the volume of paperwork and preventing duplication. Those Committee measures were adopted in connection with the suggestions of the Chairman of the General Assembly aimed at improving the Assembly's operating methods, as well as in the context of the efforts of the Secretary General to improve the efficiency of the work of the entire UN. The speaker thanked all the Special Committee members for their support and noted particularly the contribution made by the Special Committee Office staff and Rapporteur to the Committee's work. He also expressed his gratitude to the Committee Secretariat, the conference services staff, and the Department of Public Information staff for their contribution to the successful 2004 session of the Special Committee.

24. **The Chairman** announced that the Special Committee had concluded its work in the 2004 session.

The meeting rose at 11:10 a.m.